

Birthday Celebration for
Amiri Baraka

Oct. 7, 1994



(Xm -Egyptian hieroglyphic representing the spirit-soul)

60 Years of Life
30 Years of Struggle

October 7, 1994 marks the 60th birthday of Amiri Baraka, poet, playwright, essayist, teacher, cultural theorist, social critic, and political activist. Amiri Baraka was born on October 7, 1934 in Newark, New Jersey. He attended Central Avenue School, Barringer High School, and Rutgers University in Newark, and Howard University in Washington, D.C. He has taught at numerous colleges and universities.

As the founder and leader of the Committee for a Unified NewArts (CFUN), Amiri Baraka spearheaded a mass movement for democracy and self government, built on the foundation of a Black and Puerto Rican alliance, that culminated in the election of the first African American mayor of a major northeastern city, Newark, New Jersey. Locally, CFUN established a host of important programs and institutions, including community cultural and educational centers, job training programs, the Spirit House Movers and Players, the African Free School, *Black Newark* and *Unity & Struggle* newspapers, radio and television programs, and several independent journals and publishing companies. From the 1967 Newark Rebellion to the 1974 Puerto Rican Rebellion, CFUN led mass struggles against police brutality, for decent housing, tenant and welfare rights, and the dignity of the working people of this city. On the national level Amiri Baraka played a leading role in numerous organizations and initiatives, including the Congress of African People in Atlanta, Georgia in 1970, the National Black Political Convention in Gary, Indiana in 1972, the initiation of African Liberation Day in Washington, D.C. in 1972, and the Sixth Pan-African Congress in Dar Es Salaam in 1974.

Culturally, Amiri Baraka is not only a founder of the Black Arts Movement and a major influence on young African American writers, but one of the most prolific authors in the United States. In the tradition of W.E.B. DuBois and Paul Robeson, Amiri Baraka links the rich legacies of African history and culture to the active support for the contemporary struggles for Black liberation. As a leading revolutionary cultural worker and intellectual, his words and actions continue to fire the engines of both the national and international struggle for democracy and social justice.

The Struggle Continues

Program

Masters of Ceremony:
Mihail (S. George Reed) Miguel Algarin

Drum Procession
Chief Lukman and Family

Welcome
Ras Baraka

Happy Birthday
Nadra (Vocal)
Dennis Washack (Composer, Organ)

Piri Thomas

Serious Business

Sister Souljah

Richard Cammarini

Nadra
Meticiano: Dukiv (Vocal)
Michael Westbrook (Organ)

Presentation of Nuyorican Anthology
Miguel Algarin
Pedro Piri
Nancy Mercado

Special Presentation
Kerosene Woodard

Acknowledgements
Kerissa Lewis

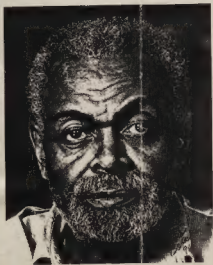
Introduction of Amiri Baraka
Simba Mweneza

Introduction of Honorary Chairpersons:
Simba Mweneza

Farah Broadout - Nandi Cepeda-Broadout

Tony Medina - Ras Baraka - Prince

Philip McPherson



Beautiful Black Women...

Beautiful Black Women...

Beautiful black women, fail, they are. Stop them, raising.
There are no beautiful women there with you. Stop them, raising.
Beautiful, stop raising, they fail. We fail them and their lies
sick out personally, at our weakness. Raising, Stop them. Black
queens. Robt Dee weeps at the window, raising, being lost in her
life, being what we all will be: sentimental bitter frustrated
deprived of her fullest light. Beautiful Black women, it is
still raining in this terrible land. We need you. We, the
unsunder, turn to stare at our immensities, we need you. Raising.

We need you, reigning, Black queens. The terrible Black ladies
wander, Robt Dee weeps, the window, raising, the calls, and her voice
is left to hurt us slowly. It hangs against the same wet plains, her
sadness and age, and the trip, and the lost heat, and the grey cold
buildings of our entrapment. Ladies... Women. We need you. We are still
maggard and weak, but we build and grow heavy with our knowledge. Women.
Come to us. Help us get back what was always ours. Help us, women. Where
are you, women, where, and who, and where, and who, and will you help
us, will you open your bodymind, will you lift me up mother, will you
let me help you, daughter, wife, friend, will you

What does the blue ribbon symbolize?

The wearing of the blue ribbon is a statement against the constant attacks on Black and Latino youth who are disproportionately unemployed, jailed, or killed, and who are being victimized daily (directly or indirectly) by a system of imperialism. It is also a statement against the recently passed crime bill. A bill which seeks to legitimize racism and further the very blatant attack on our youth. They have demanded more prisons, more police, racist gang clauses: "Three Strikes You're In," and, more of the death penalty in a country that locks more people up than any other in the world. The only real way to affect crime is through Education, Employment and Recreation. We say self respect, self determination, and self defense.

STOP THE WAR ON OUR YOUTH!

Que significa la cinta azul?

El uso de la cinta azul es una protesta contra el ataque constante hacia nuestra juventud Negra y Latina. Ellos sufren desproporcionadamente de desempleo, encarcelación y muerte siendo victimizados diariamente directa o indirectamente por un sistema imperialista. También es una declaración contra la recién aprobada "legislación contra el crimen." Esta legislación busca legitimizar el fascismo y ampliar el salvaje ataque contra nuestra juventud. Ellos han exigido más prisiones, más policías, cláusulas racistas "anti-pandillas" como la así llamada "Three Strikes You're In." Y para agravar la situación, han expandido la pena de muerte en un país que encarcela mas gente, que cualquier otro en el mundo. La única manera de reducir el crimen es a través de la educación, el empleo, y recreación. Nosotros declaramos auto-respecto, auto-determinación, y defensa propia.

QUE CESE LA GUERRA CONTRA NUESTRA JUVENTUD!

What does the red ribbon symbolize?

We wear the red ribbons in honor of those in our community who have died of AIDS, which is one of the highest killers of the Black and Latino people.

Que significa la cinta roja?

La cinta roja se usa para honrar a los que han muerto de la SIDA (AIDS), la cual es una de las causas mayores de muerte en la población Negra y Latina.

Special thanks to the following:

Robert Johnson and William Morris for Robert's Supper Club.

The musicians, especially to BlotArk:

Hobie Morgan	Reeds	Jim Orange	Vocals
Robert Banks	Piano	Willie D. West	Vocals
Wilbur Morris	Bass	Malvin Solomon	Vocals
Eddie Crawford	Drums	Rachum Sabu	Bass
Grachan Moncur III	Trombone	Rudy Walker	Drums

The youth for helping to carry it on.

And to the committee for a labor of love.

The Baraka Family

Sinceras gracias a los siguientes:

Robert Johnson y William Morris por Robert's Supper Club.

Los músicos, especialmente a BlotArk:

Hobie Morgan	Reeds	Jim Orange	Vocals
Robert Banks	Piano	Willie D. West	Vocals
Wilbur Morris	Bass	Rachum Sabu	Bass
Eddie Crawford	Drums	Rudy Walker	Drums
Grachan Moncur III	Trombone	Malvin Solomon	Vocals

La juventud por ayudarnos a continuar con este esfuerzo.

Y al comité por su labor de amor.

La Familia Baraka

Committee to Honor and Pay Tribute to Amiri Baraka

Honorary Chairpersons

Amrita Baraka
Ras Baraka

Chairpersons

Karlens Lewis
Simba Mwene
Komozi Woodard

Kevin Alexander
Miguel Algarin
Aminifu
Asali (Irene Dowdell)
Yillie Bey
Butchie
Ben Caldwell
Richard Cammarieri
Nandi L. L. Cepeda-Broadout
Dhafi Changa
Risani Zachariah Dair
Dallia
Pamela Broadout
Ralph Grant
Jacobs Hill
Ngoma Hill
David Hungerford

Ibura
Ruben Johnson
Margaret C. Jones
Maxwell Jumah
Jinamiza (Barbara King)
Malkia King
Marvin McCray
Wilbur McNeil
Nancy Mercado
Mihasi (S. George Reed)
Nadri Miller
Herb e Morgan
Pamela Morgan
Ngela (Coleman Miller)
Ted Finckney
Carolyn Reed
Halter Sullivan
Tangifu
Tavik
Stanley Terrell
Lee Toyler
Upaj
Louis Wilson
Ted Wilson